

Working-Class Choice in Chicago Elections:

Vote Ed Hershey!



credit: Ed Hershey

This election year, in addition to the Party for Socialism and Liberation's presidential ticket of Claudia De la Cruz and Karina Garcia, working people have another candidate worthy of their vote: Ed Hershey of the Working Class Party for Illinois' 4th Congressional District. His campaign poses a working-class alternative to the liberal darling Jesús "Chuy" García, who has been humping it for the Segregation City bosses for almost 40 years, providing a "progressive" gloss to their racist class rule. Hershey—a long-time Chicago Public Schools teacher and member of the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU)—calls for building a party of the working class in opposition to *both* parties of capital. Hershey's campaign provides a rallying point to begin that fight. We call on all those in the workers movement to help build Hershey's campaign and vote for him on November 5!

Chicago is a microcosm of capitalist America, where the bourgeoisie sustains itself by inflaming racial antagonisms, keeping the workers divided rather than fighting together for their common interests. The city rulers' liberal wing has played an outsized role in fanning the flames of division, as is vividly seen in the ongoing migrant crisis. Chicago's black and Latino population—already pitted against each other for a shrinking pool of jobs, education and housing—have been forced by a "progressive" City Hall into competition with tens of thousands of Venezuelan refugees fleeing U.S. imperialism's assaults on their homeland.

Democratic mayor Brandon Johnson's answer is to dump newly arrived migrants wherever he can get away with, such as sidewalks outside police stations or filthy, disease-ridden warehouses, while throwing their Spanish-speaking children into resource-poor, segregated schools.

Chicago Spartacist League

All the while, some Johnson allies, like DSA alderwoman Jeanette Taylor, openly stoke reactionary fervor by spewing anti-migrant garbage and demanding no more migrants! But it is not just such bigots who fuel reaction, but also the mayor's liberal coalition, whose moral appeals and finger-wagging to "care" about the migrants only breed resentment among those it is squeezing.

Anger over getting screwed by Democratic Party "progressives" drives the working class and oppressed to the right. The only thing the bosses have to offer is a fight among the oppressed over the paltry crumbs from the capitalist table. And, as long as the bosses have their way, the only possible outcome is deeper divisions that preclude united struggle against the class enemy. Union leaders are complicit in keeping the working class at bay. For example, the CTU tops' love affair with Johnson has hogtied the union; they cling to his coattails rather than organize strike action against him for a new contract.

It is only possible to unite workers, black people and Latinos on the basis of a program that advances the interests of all the oppressed at the expense of the bosses alone. In the case of the migrant crisis, there is a way forward for the city's multiracial working class independent of and against the liberals: a mobilization to defend the migrants, combat racial segregation and fight for jobs, education and housing for all! Hershey's campaign offers an avenue to gather the forces to wage this fight.

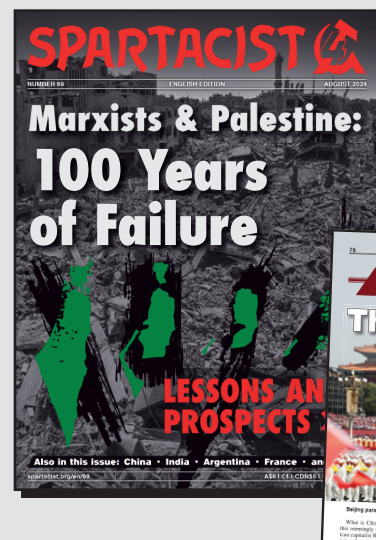
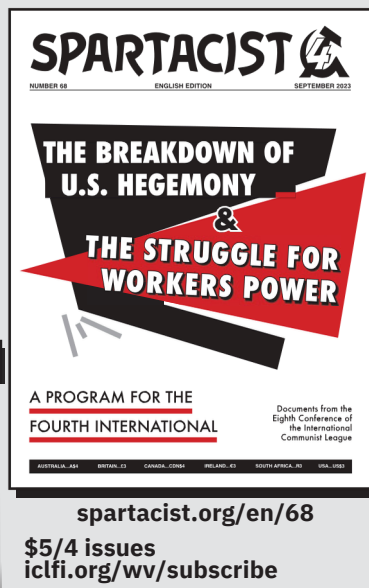
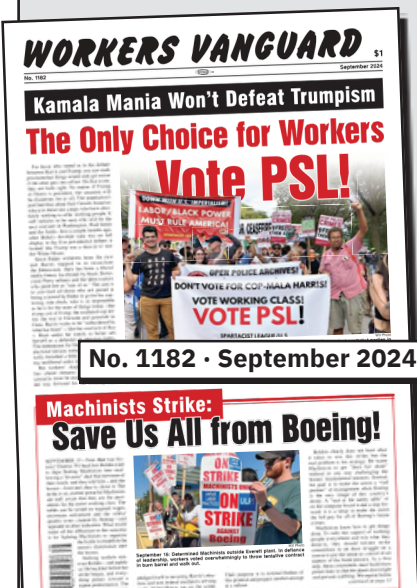
Chicago may be among the most segregated cities in America, but its powerful working class has enormous potential for integrated class struggle. Uniting working people and the black and brown masses in opposition to the common capitalist enemy demands a break with the liberal politics that create divisions. The liberals must be exposed and fought! We are critical of Hershey's campaign precisely because it does not combat this major obstacle holding back the struggles of the oppressed.

Instead, his program offers nothing more than calls for "black and white, unite and fight," which undermines his campaign and the fight to build a multiracial workers party. Calls for unity are a dime a dozen. Even García fancies himself as a "coalition builder between Chicago's Latino and African American communities." In the U.S., the deeply segregated black population has been kept at the bottom through force and deceit in order to fortify capitalist profits and power. Fusing the fights for black liberation and socialist revolution is the only way to unite the class—and address the special oppression of black people.

Despite our differences, we think Ed Hershey's campaign provides an important opportunity to begin to consolidate an independent working-class pole against the Democrats. *Vote Hershey!* ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

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